



PHILIP ANGELIDES
Treasurer
State of California

March 31, 2004

The Honorable John Vasconcellos
Chair
Senate Education Committee
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 4203
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jack Scott
Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 on Education
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senators Vasconcellos and Scott:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to Governor Schwarzenegger's proposed elimination of State support for University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) outreach programs – after slashing State support for these programs by 50% earlier this year. These programs are critically important to ensuring that all of California's students have access to our State's world-renowned educational system, and that students of every background are able to participate fully in the 21st Century economy.

Elimination of outreach programs means students all over the State stand to lose the critical support they need to boost their chances of going onto college. The University of California estimates that if two UC outreach programs – the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement Program (MESA), and the Early Academic Outreach program (EAOP) – were eliminated, more than 110,000 low-income and disadvantaged students would not receive academic support services that help them prepare for college. Elimination of these programs, and others on the Governor's chopping block, would deny many of these students the opportunity they deserve to attend our first class colleges and universities, and would hurt our society and our economy in the long run.

In January of this year, I had the opportunity to visit UC, CSU, and community college campuses from Chico to San Diego, as well as high schools in Oakland and Watsonville,

where I heard first-hand of the importance of outreach programs. I met many students who told me that their dreams of attending our State's four year universities simply would not be possible without the assistance, support, and guidance they received from the very outreach programs the Governor is proposing to eliminate. Meeting these students was truly one of my most moving experiences as Treasurer, because these young peoples' life stories reflect such struggle, and yet, so much potential.

At San Diego City College, I met four students in the MESA outreach program there. These students all overcame great obstacles to attend college – none of their parents had gone to college, and each of the students worked at jobs just to make ends meet. Michelle Scott, a young woman whose story I was particularly touched by, is a single mother who credits the MESA program with keeping her off the streets and out of trouble, and with taking an interest in her when no one else would. Thanks to San Diego City College's MESA program, Michelle and the other three students I met are all poised to go on to California universities, to study biology, engineering, or biomedical science.

In West Oakland, I visited McClymonds High School, a school where more students drop out than graduate. There I met Antoine Davis, a truly inspiring young man who has defied the odds against him and not only will graduate this spring, but will do so as student body president, editor of the school paper, and with a 3.7 grade point average. Antoine says college outreach programs helped him to prepare for and apply to college. He has already been accepted at UC San Diego, and is waiting to hear from his first choice—UC Berkeley.

And at Watsonville High School, I met Jenny Gama. Jenny's mother came from Mexico, learning English to help her children succeed. When Jenny entered 7th grade, her mother realized she could no longer help Jenny because she had never completed 7th grade herself. But with the help of a UC Santa Cruz outreach program that places UC counselors in high schools, Jenny will be one of the first in her family to go to college. She is planning to be a doctor.

As Treasurer, my first priority is to protect our economy today, and to build our economy for tomorrow. I believe the Governor's budget proposals for our public colleges and universities, including his plan to eliminate UC and CSU outreach programs, takes our State in the wrong direction – undermining our State's historic commitment to a first-class higher educational system that provides opportunity to all Californians, rather than protecting and increasing the critical investments in education that will be our ticket to economic progress in the decades ahead.

I appreciate your Committee's consideration of this important matter. Please feel free to contact Dennis Trujillo of my staff at (916) 653-4046 if I can provide any more information.

Sincerely,



Phil Angelides
State Treasurer

cc: Members of the Senate Education Committee
Members of the Senate Budget Subcommittee #1 on Education